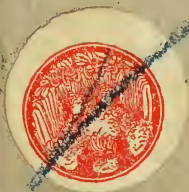


MONOSCRIPTS

—
DILLMAN





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MONOSCRIPTS

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BY
WILLARD DILLMAN

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
RICHARD BURTON



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INTRODUCTORY

The Essay and the Essayist

Few words of English speech are more misused and misunderstood than the Essay. Often, perhaps most often, it is taken to mean a prose treatise, or dissertation, its object information, its manner serious and its length formidable. But surely this is not the form which makes the Essay precious to those who cherish literature; not the essay of Montaigne and Bacon, of Sir Thomas Browne, and Steele, and Addison; of Lamb and Hazlitt and Stevenson.

Save in the particular of being written in prose, there is in the true essay no resemblance to the informational article; and one must on

reflection feel that such a phrase as "an essay on mathematics" is a contradiction in terms.

An essay in the nice sense is a prose composition wherein the author essays to reveal his personality, as he discourses of anything beneath the sun; garrulous, frank, intimate, and irresponsible. What he refuses in responsibility, he makes up in responsiveness; he is nothing if not confidential. It is a sort of golden chat he gives you, and the French are wise to coin the word *causerie* to imply it. Your essayist born in the purple is a right good fellow who addresses himself, not to that vague and vulgar entity the "public," but to the dear or gentle reader; he carries on a conversation *unter vier augen*; we enjoy with him a literary *solitude à deux*.

Hence, the genuine essayist does not take himself too seriously; he

laughs in kindly fashion at the foibles of mankind, beginning with himself; and the under side of his humor (he is always rich in that saving quality) is tears; for he is deep-hearted, knowing the *lachrymae rerum*. Even as he loves his fellow man, so does he the fine phrase, it is indeed the very breath of his nostrils. He is, truth to tell, an aristocrat of letters whose taste can be trusted never to commit a *faux pas*; this, in delightful contrast with the democratic breadth of his sympathies.

No other literary maker so unfeignedly reveals himself, not even the lyric poet. The latter masks behind his song, he voices the race. But your essayist, while charmingly expressive of *homo sapiens*, yet is always tender of the Me, and dares to set his own Ego piquantly against all comers, to cosset his own idiosyncrasies; arch individualist

that he is, to display at full length his egoism — not egotism, another and poorer thing. He scorns to use the editorial “we,” that modern banality; the mock modest “one” is not for him; he says “I” right on, and means it, and wins the reader’s love by his openness and honesty.

The essayist’s advantage over the novelist and dramatist, too, is plain; the forms they use are objective, they hide behind their characters, but he stands forth in his proper person. We see him as he is, and know where to find him. This attitude, be sure, makes for friendship.

His form shifts with theme and mood; perchance he can express it all in a page or two, but if matter presses, he shall have twenty. An accomplished essayist will give you a thumb-nail sketch, an atmospheric scene, a pungent aphorism with its attendant illustration, within the limits of a single page. For

subject-matter, it matters not. Montaigne may speak of the man in the moon, Lamb of Roast Pig, Stevenson of Gas Lamps, and we are well content; man and manner are all, the subject naught, so long as it be the master whose voice delights our ear. Both subject and form, in sooth, take the impress of the author's personality; and because that personality is rich and sensitive, sweet and wise, he teaches you much of Life, while making you thrall to his winsome ways.

The essay then — this quiet, much-embracing, ever-luring fire-side form of literature — comes late in the literary development of any people, since it means psychology, style, the social note; in short, civilization. There are fewer great essayists in English than dramatists, novelists, and poets. One can count the number of the elect and not exceed the fingers

of the two hands. Even when a writer is capable of the essay, like Ruskin or Emerson, he often muffles the note, because of didactic purpose or moral earnestness. For your true essayist, though by no means averse from saving souls, refuses to forego his light touch and his whimsical, albeit tender, interpretation. He prefers to say a deep thing in an airy way. Ease and elegance, with him, come before weight. He knows that he need not be heavy to be fraught with meaning.

The French are the most expert essayists of the modern world, because they, more than other folk, have the social graces and enter into social relations. And the essay can only flourish when society has reached a certain consciousness of solidarity. This explains the *Spectator* papers of Addison and Steele; it explains the work of that genial

old sceptic, Montaigne, who gave the name and form of essay to the world, the English Bacon there-upon taking the hint from him. For the essayist is, as I describe him, an extreme individualist, he always talks with *tout le monde* in mind; for "the centre," as Matthew Arnold would say. And the French are the one nation whose authors have kept steadily to a sense of social relation and obligation.

The brief, pleasant papers which make up this little book belong to the genus essay, as here dilated upon. Mr. Dillman, if he do not possess all the essay qualities — what man would be so bold as to claim them? — is nevertheless a genial student of life, who, from his coign of vantage, looks upon the passing show, feels its superficial attraction, yet penetrates beneath the surface; and through it all, loves and

believes in the human creatures who constitute it.

His phrase is well-turned, he says things to make you think without being sententious; and he uses the privilege of his "scattered meditations," as Bacon called them, for suggestion, stimulation, pleasure. In an age when we read as we run — or run away before we read — these little essays have their special use, and many, dipping into these pages, will get from them a good more than commensurate with the expended time. To all such readers — gentle, dear, and kind — is the volume addressed.

RICHARD BURTON.

MONOSCRIPTS

SELDOM has youth or maid
lived but in whose heart there
sprang many desires for the
higher, many longings for the un-
known, which would not be put
down. They beheld the mountains
with their white tops; they walked
through the early dew and saw the
sunrise; they noted the lark and the
lofty eagle; they felt the mystery of
a windy dusk, with the moon droop-
ing into a languorous bed of cloud,
the waves striding in and crumb-
ling upon the sand, and certain
gulls adventuring out upon the
waters. They read the epics of eld
and the lyrics of yesterday; they
heard recounted deeds of patriot-
ism in many nations; they drank
eagerly of the music of many mas-

ters. They were impelled away and onward toward they knew not what; they were inspired with partly revealed visions of they knew not what; they received strange promises of they knew not what; and were willing to embrace any weird fate for they knew not what.

WHEN many examples have been noted and an average of human conduct has been ascertained, the fact remains that man desires to be honorable and is as nearly so as he may be; that the earth is good to be alive upon; that wealth will not often shove by justice; that friends are generally true; that lovers are mostly devoted; and that there is evidence of greater content beyond. And even when a weight of testimony collects to confute all these things, we are better off if we still strive to believe that they are true.

WITH so many diverting interests capable of engaging the mind in profitable contemplation — with the lessons of history, the stores of literature and art, the wealth of the sciences, and the numerous fascinating problems of present society — is it not monstrous that any man should squander an hour in the consideration of his own trivial perplexities?

OF THE two manifest methods that are offered man for the obtaining of happiness — the multiplying of his means on the one hand and on the other the heroic reducing of his necessities — the latter, though seeming to promise less, has the virtue of being both simpler in performance and surer in effect. No man is so well content as he who, having adopted an abiding philosophy, chooses a plain course and learns

to live without envy and with few possessions. It was not the hero of a fable who, having lost his stomach's function in the gaining of certain millions, offered one of those millions for its replacement, and without result.

IT IS a strengthening thought that every difficult feat well done, every unworthy suggestion smitten down, and every obstacle bravely defeated may have its effect for the better upon a human destiny.

MANY causes conspire in prompting man to grasp each joy as it is offered in the course of his none too pleasant passage. Experience tells him that these tender occasions will be infrequent enough; he knows that he will never henceforth be so young and capable of enjoying them as he

is today; and by a kind of prophecy he divines that increasing years can hold no greater comfort than the memory of earlier joys.

IN HOW many a heart have sprung thoughts of noble endeavor and gigantic deeds, and how great a void these visions have left upon their fading away. Man will do well to remember that most of life must be lived close to the earth. The greatest battle will last but three days and must be followed by months of commonplace in camp. Not many supreme tests will fall to the lot of any man; and at the last both emperor and guard must spend a weary elderly age in thinking upon glories past. He who has hit upon a simple way of life, in which he is content to do small things well, will live as long as any man, and will be rewarded to the extent of a happy heart.

WHO has not observed aged persons studiously making friends with the young? Old women seek to win the love of children with sweet things and with tales of witchcraft. Old men are seen craftily bartering counsel for the friendship of youths, giving gifts and bequeathing legacies to boot. We selfishly desire to be remembered after we are gone. We are not willing to drift away alone upon those strange waters — where there is not so much sound as the friendly cry of a gull, and where wind and tide tend ever outward into the misty twilight — and leave no tie of affection or kindly remembrance behind.

THE most precious motive that can impel a man to do right is the thought, borne about with him day and night, that some one cares. That which stead-

fastly supports him in resisting shame is the notion that some one would grieve. His most potent spur toward the assailing of any lofty feat is the dear remembrance that some one will exult.

WHEN a man has advanced so far on the way of life that his vision turns habitually backward, when the past appears a land of sunny and pleasant affairs, and when the future ceases to beckon with hope or interest, he may be said to have grown old.

IT IS a trait of youth that it will cherish and fondle any hint of melancholy that assails it, and make the most of its fancied hardships. Crabbed age, on the contrary, will be seen to magnify its pleasant sensations and pathetically disregard whatever is pain-

ful. It will aver that age is more robust than youth, that the hairless pate is properly the subject of jest, that devised teeth are more regular than those of nature, and that there is no jig-maker like your old one.

NO MAN is utterly lost nor yet wholly without hope of regeneration whose heart still kindles with a kind of nobility at the thought—induced by an old song or a forgotten picture—of the mother who gave him being, or by the sight of the flag of his country.

IN HOW high a degree of wonder is that man to be regarded—who in life's continuing conflict will not recognize defeat! Now and again blighting disaster assails him, but he is seen to rise and stagger forward, bruised but unbowed. It matters little in the

case of such a man whether he be at last victorious or whether he perish in a final bout with fate. He can say with his last breath that he never gave up, and earth's greatest hero can say no more.

EXPERIENCE has taught many a woman to shape her life into a course of aloofness and abstention. She shuns the embrace of great happiness lest its cause be suddenly removed. She rejects the exultation induced by high hopes, dreading the shock that may result from disappointment. She dares not admit love fully, through the fear that its object may be snatched from her. She learns to keep herself cheerful but discreet; to make her heart a citadel in which her emotions shall be well guarded; and to admit the army of beleaguering sentiments no further than to the outposts.

FROM the first we are attended by a sergeant, who neither hurries nor is impatient, for he knows that we shall fall into his hands in due time. Sometimes, mostly when we are young, we see nothing of him for weeks and imagine that we have shaken him off. Then suddenly, when the sun is near to setting, or in the edge of a moonlit evening, we spy his shadow keeping even pace with ours. Or, while we are walking through dank woods, we see him arise from behind a tree and leisurely precede us in the path. While we are young we regard the sergeant as our arch enemy, and would avoid him at any cost. But as we advance through life and obtain many a closer view of him, he loses a part of his terror. When we grow older and discover that life is so unlike what we had thought; that so few of its early

promises are kept and so many of its hopes are myths; that our best comrades have given up and that the road is becoming uncertain, we conclude that he is no bad fellow after all. At the last we meet him at close range, and make no effort to escape his arrest. We find that he has a sort of rugged smile on his face and a welcome clutch to his hand. We feel that he knows all things and can end all ills. He makes no promises, yet we trust him for a just and honorable officer. We see that he has been a good friend all the while, and we take his arm gladly enough.

MAN'S final attitude toward his fellow millions is likely to be marked by an embracing charity. When he discovers in how great an extremity of discomfort men and women pass their years; when he learns how cruel is

their strife for existence and how futile their hope of reward, he is little inclined to judge them for their vices. He comes to see that the sum of their foolish sins is slight enough when compared with the giant injustice under which they cower from birth to death.

MAN'S mind is ever fixing a date beyond which, certain things having been accomplished, good fortune will result. Then all valleys are to be green and all skies blue; then harvests are to be abundant, lovers are to be faithful and life is to fall in pleasant places. This date is come up with and passed, and another is set and come up with, and the world keeps as full of trouble as ever. But man is not thus stopped from thinking that a good time is still somewhere on the way, nor should he be.

AN UNHAPPY trait in man's nature causes him to hold at too light a fee certain rare possessions until they are his no longer. He may pursue his daily course, not greatly valuing his friends, until a time of parting comes. Then he will remember in what agreeable ways his life has chanced; with what friendly salutations he was wont to be accosted at dawn; with what comradeship his walk was sometimes lightened; and with how great cheer, a day's march having been finished, bread was broken beside the nightly faggot.

THE arrangement of traffic on this planet presupposes the constant moving forward of every creature. Each is to maintain its appointed pace, even in the midst of congestion. If a unit stop, diverge or turn backward, it will

imperil its own existence and to some degree disarrange the system under which all are moving. Each must make definite daily progress or be utterly lost, overrun and forgotten.

TO WHAT extreme simplicity may man's existence be reduced without impeding either the body's functions or the expansion of the mind. A loaf and a cup of drink are necessary, to which may be added by way of luxury a book and a fire that will supply light and heat. When these are provided nothing is wanting that is indispensable to the development of a great soul.

WE OBSERVE the toiling thousands and note how they dig and hew with puny reward, and we deplore the seeming uselessness of work with

the hands. But in another mood we understand that happiness is comparative; that he who nightly rests beside a fire of his own making, and eats bread and meat that he has unquestionably earned, is as happy as any man, and that his content is founded upon a basis that will not give way.

IT IS fortunate to grow old, if ever, only when the body still retains some of the vigor of youth, when the mind is richly stored with knowledge that has become wisdom through assimilation, and when the memory is charged with creditable work accomplished. To grow old simply by the reckoning of years, in which existence is the only matter to be recorded, is hardly to be desired. One might thus come to be a centenarian, and yet be no richer, better or wiser than he was at fifty.

A SECRET of happiness, much esteemed by him who has hit upon it, is to encourage the mind to dwell liberally upon whatever good things he possesses. If he have health and a good spirit, if he hold the knack to relish an open sky, a rollicking wind, a tossing sea, or any such abundant matter, and, most of all, if he learn that he is ardently loved, he may easily disregard all things that he has not.

GREAT events are the cause of nations coming into being and of their dissolution. They sway states and create history. But individuals are moved by small, intimate happenings. A man who will dance merrily at the sound of a supper horn may remain unmoved by the issue of a great battle. The flight of an aeroplane or the finding of the earth's pole

will be of less moment to him than an increase in his wage or some trivial success in his day's business. The recurring season of harvest, a holiday with its well-earned liberty, the rise of a full moon in autumn, the winning of an honest woman, and notably the cry of his first child, will move a man more deeply than the fall of empires.

IS IT not a matter to be marveled at that man, who is the master of matter, should exist so briefly? He no sooner ceases to be a youth than he finds himself already beginning to be old. He has scarcely emerged from the obscurity and bewilderment of early life when he suddenly finds the rest of the road opening before him and leading straight and unbroken to the end. Trees that were old when he was born are scarcely older when he passes. Mountains,

with their foundations set well in the earth and their heads rising serenely above the clouds, regard his impotent existence as he regards the minute-long life of the insect. The house that he builds will outlive him by a hundred years. The very cloak that he wears will outlast its owner by many a decade, and may, by retaining the form of his shoulders, remain a mute reminder of him long after he has dropped away.

NOT the least painful process falling to the lot of man is the abandoning of those notions and habits that are the transitory property of youth. Man finds it hard to forget the chivalrous being that bore about his spirit so gaily when he and the world were young. He finds it hard to get upon good terms with this unfamiliar face that now confronts him in the

glass. These features that are becoming hard and gross, these eyes that have grown cunning to spy out the truth but have forever lost the beautiful vision — what has this stranger to do with the joyous youth whom he knew aforetime?

WHAT pleasant scene that gives the traveler a moment's joy — a farmstead in the midst of an orchard, cows and sheep feeding in a bit of meadow, and green mountains rising beyond — but may have been two hundred years in the making? With how great travail and by what a prodigal spending of life was each pyramid reared among the winds. A picture that affords one glimpse of truth may be all that the artist left after a life of fierce endeavor. How many a splendid song was yielded up only with the life of the singer. Yet no

man need draw back who has set his hand to do a worthy work. He should be content if his steadfast keeping on may lay up moments of honest pleasure for other men somewhere and sometime.

THAT which man believes is, so far as this life goes, quite as potent as that which is true. Such is his condition that he may not be certain, by scientific standards, of this or that until death looses the strong knot; but that which he ardently believes becomes, for him, the utter truth. Fortunately also, he may to some degree elect what he shall believe. In which case he will do well to think that virtue and endeavor are rewarded, that those sins which are done in ignorance and in despite of oneself will be wiped away, and that a generous mercy hovers on the far side of death.

MAN was never yet beaten in a single combat nor in a series of combats. These are no more than incidents that are to be forgotten. So long as he keeps the spirit to rise and push forward into new conflicts he must be reckoned among the victors. Only when this spirit dies and he finds himself without courage or desire to renew the contest may he be said to be utterly defeated.

WHAT loss is more irreparable than that of a well beloved friend? Our house may be rebuilt upon its ashes; our ship may be pulled off the rocks and got afloat; our lost money may be earned over again; even our shattered reputation may be built up once more. But the sight of a friend's face averted in distrait, the thought that only yesterday he loved and trusted us, while today

we are alien and exiled from his heart, leaves a void that we can scarcely hope will ever be supplied.

MAN will find the joy of friendship a little modified by the consideration that he is loved not so much for what he is as for what his friend conceives him to be. He will discover that it is impossible, even by the most diligent and continuing effort, to justify the ideal that an ardent lover has built about him.

IT HAS of late become a custom of thought to regard the Deity as a universal intelligence rather than as a being with personal attributes. The notion that this intelligence tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, notes the fall of a sparrow, or caters to the crying ravens, while sufficiently beautiful, no longer receives the wide acceptance

that was accorded it in a more simple time. Yet the thought of a higher power with an interest in mortal welfare will not easily be banished from men's minds. Life were desolate enough if we could not, finding ourselves in some dire strait, cry, "God help us;" or upon being delivered from an imminent misfortune say, "Thank God;" or upon parting with a well beloved comrade exclaim, "God be with you."

IT IS a matter of small comfort to the weak and sentimental (but is it not as nearly true as any general statement can be?) that man meets with just the degree of success that he deserves. The acceptance of this cold principle would do much to discredit the belief, common among the unsuccessful, that merit and virtue seldom meet their just rewards.

IN ORDER that life shall be tolerable, man must have a few friends, or at the very lowest, one friend. He must have a companion with whom he can talk of intimate things. He may exist deprived of well nigh everything that life has been thought to demand, so long as fate does not remove his most dear comrade.

NO SOONER has man's mind become luminous with the flame of some lofty enterprise than it is assailed by the counter suggestion, "What's the use?" This blighting hint conjures a spectre of toil and hardship, points out perilous heights that must be scaled, and says that at the end only blank failure may result. It will, if allowed to find shelter in his mind, doom the bravest man to be a slave till he die. It would have slain the dream of Columbus;

it would have quenched the fire of Shakespeare; it would have palsied the hand of Washington. It is a crouching coward among the mind's nobilities, a sapper of ambition, an assassin of faith. No soul that has seen a great light will behold it long if it listen to the chilling negation: "What's the use?"

THAT familiar analogy likening man's life to the blade of grass does not seem to have been invented; it seems rather to have grown like the temples of eld and to be as natural as they. Man's span of existence, when considered as a part of the sum of years making up eternity, is scarcely more extended than that of the yearly blade. The chief difference is that man may think about his life; he may consider why and whence he came, what is his poor mission here, and what is to follow his passing.

THE prudent man will contrive to mould his mind in such a way that life shall continue to possess a kind of freshness. He will cultivate the attitude of a discoverer. He will pretend to himself to be passing for the first time among scenes that have become old and flat to his fellow-travelers.

FEW things are more piteous than the efforts of man in his gropings to hit upon the right. He has that within him that tells him something, but he knows that this instinct is not always correct. He has authority from without, but it is often vague and self-contradictory. The thought hovers ever before him that a hair may divide the false and the true. He sees men fondly embrace death in support of error; he sees other men hugging absurd superstitions in the belief

that they are oracles from heaven. With these things before him he thinks that he must look well to his own faiths, lest they also crumble. Of this he may be quite certain, however, that those who hold opposing beliefs do so in honor and that they are as brave and devoted as he.

HERE and there we find a man who passes through life like a well-contented traveler, having an eye and an ear open for whatever unusual thing he may chance upon. To such a man life becomes a never-ceasing series of wonders, which it is good to regard from many angles and to ponder over and to classify. When many things are arrayed together he finds evidence upon which to base certain observations that partake modestly of the nature of laws. By remembering what has fallen out on

many a yesterday, he will venture to say what we may expect today and tomorrow. These modest observations, when he has set them down in appropriate language, we recognize as truths that may illumine our own passage through similar scenes.

AMONG the wonders that confront us, the little with which the average man will be content is not the least. Strength to rise with the dawn, a pot of porridge to break his fast withal, companions to share the toils and slight victories of the day, a supper of meat and bread, and after it a fire and a pipe of tobacco — give a man these things and he will be as happy as a dog with a kind master. What shall we say, then, of a system of society under which even these small favors are obtained only by a continuing struggle?

WHILE such a thing may not be capable of demonstration, it is still comfortable to suppose that every generous act has its effect in the life of some fellow man; that for each time we present a cheerful front in the midst of disaster some companion will be encouraged in a like state; and that each courageous word will produce expanding circles of cheer in a world where cheer is needed.

ALL save the commonest are vouchsafed certain great white moments, when the spirit vaults loftily, when the world seems good and joyous, and when existence is held to be the rarest of good fortune. At such a time the thought of soldiers, patriots, martyrs and artists of times past will fill the mind with a radiant glow, and one will feel fitted for the performance of any great and worthy task.

MAN'S highest delights do not result, as has been supposed, from riches nor idleness nor any invented pleasure. They come while he is at the height of some stupendous and worthy labor, when every unit of energy that he is able to muster is being expended. Just as the rock begins to topple, just as the shoulder starts the wheel from the rut, just as the battle is at its climax, when a little more effort will turn the tide, and he is able to put forth that effort — at such a time man will enjoy his greatest ecstasy.

IS IT not a startling and ominous fact that nothing stands still? — Neither man's body nor his mind, neither civilization nor the state of the earth itself, is stationary; but every object is either advancing or retrograding. Man cannot, if he would, find himself

exactly the same tomorrow that he is today. He awakes this morning a little wiser or a little more foolish, somewhat richer or somewhat poorer, a bit stronger or a bit weaker, than he was yesterday. And tomorrow's dawn will find him a trifle better or a trifle worse, a little more advanced or a little more lagging in the procession, than he is today. Is not this portentous truth enough to stab him forward into the utmost exertion?

OF THE three desirable virtues extolled by the apostle, charity is not only the greatest, as he declared, but it is the most useful. In those favored fields where it blossoms abundantly will be discovered the rarest happiness, while its absence is to be reckoned among the greatest calamities. Strangely enough, also, it is likely to be possessed most by

those who have been tempted and have sinned. For these, in judging their fellows, will consider not merely their times of indiscretion, but will take into account those far more numerous occasions upon which they have bloodily resisted, and successfully repulsed, the foe.

THE way through life, if it is to be rendered tolerable, must be relieved by many a small diversion. Looked upon candidly, it is a grim journey from the oblivion preceding birth to an inevitable blotting-out at the latter end. Man is justified in making the most of each fair illusion that offers. The kiss of a child, the inspiriting effect of rich music, the brushing of a south wind at evening, the touch of a well-beloved hand — any sweet and tender event that may give life a pleasant face for the nonce — is to be embraced eagerly.

INCREASING age brings a few modest satisfactions to atone for some of its losses. Man no longer entertains illusions. The path henceforth is straight and simple. The future, if it hold no promises, has also no further terrors. The fears of youth he now dismisses with a weary smile. Whatever lies in the future, it can be no less lovely, no more bitter or disappointing, than what he has already endured.

TO MANY a woman there comes a day when she is startled broad awake and stands appalled at a sudden discovery. "Is this all?" she asks, almost in terror; and again, "Is this all?" Youth has been a riot and a tumult of joys; but youth has now passed, leaving little enough by way of fulfilment of its promises. She can see nothing ahead save the daily

repetition of petty and most trivial affairs, stretching on and on to the end, with no more ennobling visions, no added exaltations, no further raptures. Happy the woman who, at such a crisis, is shaken with a vaulting ambition, or ennobled with a passion for ministering to the wholly unfortunate, or inspired with some new and compelling love.

THAT desirable human state described as content — that condition of soul which is pursued diligently and with pain through life — is in reality so rare as to be almost fabulous. Man will do well to learn that he is not meant to enjoy extreme felicity except at very rare moments. And even when such a moment comes he may find its joy qualified by the omen that the rest of life is not likely to hold another like it.

HARDSHIP, want and opposition have their uses and may be regarded as benefits if we but have the courage so to take them. For, look you, success is enjoyed at its fullest only when it follows years of seeming failure. It has become proverbial that riches, though they may be welcome to the man who wins them fairly, mean next to nothing to him who was born rich. Victory won by a mere feint cannot bring the exultation that crowns the courageous struggle in which the hazard has been doubtful.

MOST futile and least to be forgiven among human weaknesses is that quality of acridity that would lay its blighting influence in the way of oneself or of one's neighbor. Life provides room for almost every sentiment to be imagined, but it provides neither

room nor excuse for bitterness. For the sake of one's neighbor, if for no other reason, one should find it possible to bear about a smiling face and a charitable heart. A ship will find peril enough in the winds and lightnings, and buffeting sufficient from the waves, in its necessary cruise, without encountering dangers from other vessels sent out to annoy it.

IT IS vital that man should harbor an illusion and that it should not depart with the burning out of the glow of youth. To allow his illusion to fade utterly is to invite sudden and overwhelming defeat. An ox will find the herbage no less green and tempting in the morning though the block and shambles await him at the end of day. Man should be no more curious to seek out what unlovely fate awaits him. He is fortunate if he can continue

steadfastly to believe that the golden valley of heart's desire lies just beyond the jagged slope that he is painfully climbing.

OF THE several values of comradeship with those rare spirits that are to be discovered along the way, the chief is the ennobling effect of such comradeship upon ourselves. Our friend, really human and imperfect enough, assumes a sort of nobility from having been much dwelt upon in thought, and becomes an ideal by which our own actions are regulated. When petty thoughts would creep in, we remember that our comrade would not harbor these things, and we straightway banish them. When unworthy deeds suggest themselves, we think with what contempt our comrade would regard them, and they are thrust aside.

MAN'S nature retains some hint of the ancient nomad. The old tribal yearning for a change of pasture, for fresh scenes and new activities, creeps upon him with a suasion that is hardly to be resisted. There comes a time when the thought of plowing these same fields again becomes irksome to a degree; when the prospect of garnering this uncertain crop fall after fall till the vigor finally oozes from the bones presents a climax of despair. In such an attitude of mind he will abandon whatever lands or goods he is seized of and set out upon any wild adventure that offers.

WHO has not observed with what profligacy the youthful throw away their hours of happiness, as if the store would last forever? He who has gained prudence with the flight of years,

and has found how rare are the occasions of supreme content, will linger over them like a calculating epicure, that they may be enjoyed to the fullest. For while he is in the midst of such a state he will foresee the times to come when to be transported back into this moment will seem to be the sum and culmination of human joy.

MAN should welcome any lofty ambition that assails him, even though it is never to be realized. The sense of nobility that comes with the attempting of the almost insurmountable is sufficient remuneration for any pain that can result from failure. What final success coming to the inventor shall be compared with the inspiration that is his while making his first crude experiments? Can the poet's well acted drama bring more pleasurable excitement than

he felt in the making of it? Can fame and glory produce in the artist a wilder joy than the exaltation of spirit with which his work was created?

WEALTH and reputation will give a man a dignity that would scarcely be his without them. Observe one who has long been a chief in his city suddenly deprived of his bonds and possessions and on his way to prison for defalcation. His eye has lost its defiance; his hair and beard are suddenly seen to have become straggling and white; his clothing clings foolishly about a shrinking form. No hats are removed for him now; no one stands while he sits; no one waits upon his words as if they were oracles. Yet he is the same man that he was yesterday, being neither better nor worse, neither more nor less.

THAT generous glow of spirit, known among artists as the joy of life—that bubbling exultation, most common to youth, but happily sometimes extending its beneficent touch well into the vale of years—which one of heaven's favors is more to be desired? So rare and precious is the joy of life that it is to be welcomed when it appears and enjoyed eagerly while it lasts; and no monstrous creed is to be suffered to destroy its tender fragrance.

IT IS the judgment of many who have grown old that it is by no means a misfortune to quit life while the primal glow of youth still exults in the blood. These veterans have agreed that there is little enough at the far end of the road to make up for the lank hips and bony knees that have brought them limping thither. To turn away from

the banquet while the hall is filled with laughter and a merry chatter; to leave the stage early in the evening, before any omen comes of the tragic last act; to salute death betimes, with the ruddiest of smiling lips; to be remembered forever as a gay and chivalrous youth — surely these things are not to be fled from as unwelcome.

THE regret of the ecclesiastic, that man inclines readily toward evil, that he is largely given over to sin and is almost wholly bad, may be answered. Few agree upon that speculative line demarcating the proper from the sinful. That which is permitted by one is found to be forbidden and accursed by another. We may believe that the most unruly spirit draws a boundary line beyond which he will not suffer himself to be tempted. While he seems to be

the ready victim of certain vices, he may be resisting unto blood striving against others.

THE creeping forward of years in a man's life is likely to be marked by an increasing modesty. The illusion of his youth, that if he should be taken off early the world might be much the loser, is shattered when he finds that in that same world there are few things more numerous than his superiors. Items that he has held to be the very prizes of life prove to be of little account among men, as Emerson discovered that among money-lenders stocks of books are estimated as rubbish. Those lofty enterprises of his young years are set aside, one after another, and he settles upon the thought that if he can carry a small part to the end without open disgrace he will do well.

SINCE primal man lay down to sleep with his comrade the dog, having first lighted a fire to keep off the beasts of the wood, a certain wonder has not ceased to terrify and fascinate him. None have by taking thought fathomed its well guarded mystery, though many guesses have been hazarded. Yet when it chooses it may cause that one who is the meanest clown today shall become wiser than all the sages tomorrow. Of a few things those who have lived long assure us: that it loses its terror as time passes, that it is as necessary as birth, and that a time comes when it proves to be man's best friend.

WHAT tonics are so inspiring as the wind and waves and sunshine of early spring? This golden sun that one feels swinging nearer each day

brings a more than medicinal benefit. This hilarious gale, though its slap be rude, has no hint of flattery and is good to be abroad in. These buoyant waves are inspiring to look at from the shore, but are still better when one puts forth in an open boat to hold intimate acquaintance with them. They attack one insistently, but their blows and buffetings are friendly, so that a boat's progress among them is like a contest between sturdy brothers.

A MAN'S books should by no means be hoarded in his shelves. They should be loaned lavishly, nor should their early return be required. One might travel in the pack of a peddler; another might lie open on a cobbler's bench; and it would be fortunate if others should toss over far seas in the honest company of sailors.

BY EXERCISING sufficient good will, it is possible to believe that every adversity has its appointed use. The reviving breath of spring has no meaning in a land where winter is a myth. Health, which in its abundance is hardly held at a pin's fee, when it has once been lost will be diligently sought after at earth's furthest ends. Bread and meat, common to the point of being despised, to the starving become prizes of rarest luster. What is so precious to the aged man as those golden hours which in his youth he flung away like grass? The joy that is vouchsafed today may be magnified in retrospect by future adversity, and should be the more eagerly enjoyed on that account. In like manner present disasters will be the better borne by considering that they may serve to heighten the pleasure of comforts that are on the way.

WHICH of those several elements personified by the ancients is more to be wondered at than Time? Time never hurries, yet it surely triumphs at the last. Time levels all differences, corrects all errors, ends all wars. Time buries cities with desert dust, so that the jackal prowls where kings once sat in purple. Time cures all ills, forgives all sins. Cain's jaw bone is forgotten, and the cruelties of Herod and Nero have been softened away. One may believe with certainty that whatever evil is present today, all will be well in time.

NEVER yet has national peril assailed us but there have sprung up from among the cowering people certain giants with stout souls in which love of country had become a passion. These captains have had the cour-

age to look beyond the flight of shots and coil of battle and steadfastly declare, in the face of apparent discomfiture, that victory might still be the prize of consummate bravery. So long as one can believe that defeat, while imminent, is not unavoidable, and can assign a reason for that belief, his case is not yet wholly desperate.

ONCE in a summer day's journey, it may be, we shall come up with one of those rarely fortunate rogues, perfect as a young horse as to body, robust as to conscience, and with no talent for regrets, whose conduct is a matter of continuing fascination. He will receive the most lingering kiss of fortune with equanimity; and he will, with no further demonstration than a slap of his thigh, accept the disappointment of not receiving it.

EVERY lonely heart will do well to believe that there is, somewhere between the embracing seas, another heart to which it is exactly suited. It were strange enough, in a world where animals, trees and flowers have their mates, if man or woman should grope through life companionless. Two souls that were meant for each other may be long in coming together; but when the meeting occurs it will be so natural, and will induce such lofty content, that each will wonder why the other has tarried so long.

WHAT event of the voyager descending an important river is so noteworthy as his passage through that final and majestic broadening by which it moves, between imposing headlands, into the open sea? All matters petty and confining are sudden-

ly quit of. He seems to have got that which he has long been promised; he is filled with eagerness, with an exultation qualified with awe. He sees that he is embarking upon a strange new element that half entices, half forbids. He is brought to contemplate a coming and perhaps not greatly dissimilar crisis, when he shall emerge upon he knows not what further unmarked amplitudes.

WHEN a man has crept well into the middle of his years, he discovers many a knack by which his remaining days will glide smoothly to the end. He sees that he is like a stout ship that has weathered the fiercest capes and is now safely bent upon its homeward passage, a bit deep-laden and with cautiously shortened sail, but likely to finish its course with no greater perils than it is able to bear.

HAPPILY for his good account when all is done, man is not to be esteemed by any special act or group of acts. These are likely enough to prove misleading. A coward will be gallant upon occasion, while a brave man will disappoint himself and others at a crisis. He will be finally remembered by the effect of the sum of his acts, modified by what he aimed to do and by what he was known to have ardently desired.

NO MAN is so fortunate as he who is deeply busy with work for which he is aptly fitted. Idleness, no less than the slavish grind of unwelcome toil, is a rare promoter of discontent. For it affords opportunity for the consideration of one's lot, and this has ever been fatal to happiness. He who has so much agreeable labor that he can hardly accomplish each

day's allotment will find that year succeeds year with a pleasant regularity, and that he is as nearly content as one of his race may hope to become. He will discover that old age approaches almost unobserved, and he may even hope to be favored with the considerable privilege of dying in harness.

SELDOME has an honest message been given by poet or artist but it has found in the wide world certain hearts that received it gladly. Stevenson, cast upon a far outward island, still believed that there were left among the home hills some of the elect who would eagerly hear his story; and in this belief he was more than justified. No man need withhold his words for fear that there will not be waiting, on some distant shore, if no nearer, ears upon which they will fall pleasantly.

WITH how rigid a persistency will many a man, in the face of a fate whose bludgeonings are almost insupportable, still cling to his ideal of honesty! He will shake himself out of the middle of sleep, he will stumble to his toil with aching knees, he will endure a lack of sheltering garments, he will want sufficient food; but he will not steal so much as a grain of corn, he will not lie to soothe his hunger, he will not cheat in the estimation of a hair. And this stubborn course of honor he will pursue, most notable of all, without expectance of betterment and with no hope of present or future reward.

THAT noble tie that bound together the first man and woman, and that has gloriously descended until now—what words shall sufficiently magnify it?

It sways empires with the same grace that it rules a pair of young hearts. It arouses in man the nobility of the gods; it knows no deed whose accomplishment is impossible. Under its spell human clay is ennobled and radiant; the day becomes an enchanted realm, the night a sultan's garden.

A MAN'S home in these times is not different in effect from its primitive precursor. It is still a lodge from which he must fare forth each dawn in quest of fuel, furs and food. It shelters his most precious things and keeps a glowing place in his heart. It pulls him with gentle knots as he ranges through snow and wind. In the middle of gross occupations it is agreeably remembered. It greets him upon his retreat to it at dark with a jocund fire and a smell of cooking things.

IT IS well for a man to have lived simply in his youth and to come up to middle age with a heart still innocent of many things. If the latter part of life is to be tolerable, he must set out upon it with new shores to explore, new wonders to discover, with many vintages still untasted, and with a boy's heart, though he have the beard of Polonius. Let him beware of arriving at that point beyond which there is nothing unknown under the wink of the moon. For then he shall have entered upon his last useless scene, which is a mere pitiable waiting for dissolution.

WHEN the pilgrimage is accomplished and one signs for lodging at the final inn at the end of the way, what incidents of the journey are to stand out as being most notably worth while? Not the ambition selfishly attained,

not the bag of gold gotten from one's fellow-travelers, not the high games waged and won beside camp embers. Rather the lending of an arm to a halting companion, the sharing of one's bread and cup with another, the fervent clasp of a hand, the intimate look into eyes that understood, certain burning moments when two souls ascended juxtaposed to unsuspected heights—these things will blaze in the memory at that ultimate review.

UPON what odd occasions, such as the lighting of candles on a winter night, or the swift striking up of music, will the thought of old friends make peaceable invasion of the heart. Their faults are quite cast off, and only their white virtues are upon them, as they come trooping, a heroic company, into the arena of the memory.

IT HAS been the belief of some, and might with profit become the accepted thought of many, that no worthy affection can long go unrequited. The human heart subsists upon affection; there can be no surfeit of this fragile commodity; and no soul upon which it is generously bestowed can continue stolid in the matter. Work may be spent for naught; wealth may be wasted upon a venture; armies sent forth to conquer may limp home empty; but love, honestly given, will hardly fail to get its reward in kind.

THOSE hard-sought guinea stamps that man adopts, conceiving that they will keep him in a particular rank, are both useless and to the ultimate degree futile. It is a matter of wonder how little, after all, the wearing of appointed vesture, the belonging to

prescribed societies and the like serve to bend people's opinions of a man. Spite of the most careful means that he can devise to prevent it, he will remain so much of an open book as to be esteemed at about his true worth. If he have the heart of a charlatan, no assumption of virtue will deceive anyone save himself. And if, on the opposite hand, his controlling motives through life have been fair and honorable, he will be held so by his fellows though he pass thrice through bankruptcy and defeat.

ALMOST no earthly violence can upset a worthy friendship, once it has become firmly fixed. Accumulating years may bury it; twists of fortune may stretch it to the thinnest; but at the last, upon being revived by some sudden need, it will be seen to retain much of its primal sturdiness.

WE DWELL midway in a tangle of imperfections. We inhabit cities that have grown too fast, whose buildings have been hurled together without plan. We pass maimed persons craving alms; we see broken women vending trifles; our ears are hurt with tumults of contending sounds. Upon this side and upon that appear crudity, blemish and deficiency. Perhaps it is because of these things that we feel a delight of spirit so delectable when, rarely enough, we look upon a perfect painting, witness a perfect scene in a play, or hear a sweep of perfect music.

A MAN who is regularly fortunate will, if he look not sharply about him, lose his knack of parrying disaster. After having dwelt long in the manifest favor of fortune, he may find him-

self like an herb that has been nursed in a too well protected garden, which, upon receiving a first stroke of frost, easily succumbs. How greatly different is he whom pursuing adversity has stripped to the sinew. Such a man can stand as doggedly as a beggar among bandits and dare fate to do him further hurt.

A MAN will do well ever to expect better things, provided he exert what effort he can to render such expectation reasonable. Surely he may have the right to hope for a little more prosperity next year than he enjoyed last year. He may reasonably look to be a little happier tomorrow than he was yesterday. He may be forgiven for thinking that he sees in each new sunrise a promise of greater content for the day that is being born. Nay, he may be justified in

fostering such a hope even after he begins to fear that it is groundless. For when he once fatally concludes, after a prolonged succession of failures, that all the tomorrows in the world are likely to bring him only more of the same, he enters upon a state that is but a little removed from despair, and his usefulness is ended.

THERE are those who, in their resolve to accept only that which stands upon absolute reason, have not stopped short of expelling all thought of reliance upon heaven from the mind. They are like rash workmen who should test, by heavily jumping upon it, the staging that holds them from destruction.





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